

105.1152 Finger Prints

RE - FINGER-PRINTS



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Box 126, Madison Sq. P.O.  
New York City, September 29, 1926.

Nathaniel J. Palzer, Esq.,  
120 Broadway,  
New York City.

My dear Mr. Palzer: Re Finger-Prints, Hall-Mills Case

In line with our conversation this afternoon I  
enclose two documents.

1. News release issued Feb. 8, 1926, on the  
Cominsky case. Page 2 shows what the prosecution  
asked Mr. Wehde regarding his imprisonment in  
Leavenworth. See my comment later in this letter.

2. Open letter by Albert Wehde to Chester I.  
Long, president of the American Bar Association,  
concerning tactics of the prosecution in the  
Cominsky case.

Other information is hereby given you as follows:

DEFENSE COUNSEL IN COMINSKY CASE -- Cominsky was  
defended by J.J. Ludens, 311 Lawrence building, Sterling, Ill.

ATTORNEY LUDEN'S COMMENT ON MR. WEHDE'S TESTIMONY  
IN THE COMINSKY CASE -- Mr. Ludens wrote me on Feb. 5, 1926  
saying: "It was demonstrated by the aid of Mr. Wehde that  
the finger-prints were not identical and of unreliable source.  
The jury took absolutely no stock in the finger-print theory  
of the prosecution, and the defendant was acquitted."

Mr. Ludens wrote Mr. Wehde on Feb. 5, 1926;  
"The defendant, John Cominsky, was acquitted and upon  
talking to some of the jurors, I learn that they paid  
no attention whatever to the finger-print testimony of  
the prosecution. Mr. Evans' and Mr. Reinert's testimony  
was absolutely ignored as being unreliable and no juror  
placed any faith in it."

SUGGESTION REGARD MR. WEHDE'S BEING QUALIFIED BY THE  
DEFENSE AS AN EXPERT WITNESS IN YOUR CASE-- You expressed  
fear today that the prosecution would seek to discredit  
Mr. Wehde's testimony by an attack upon him as an ex-  
prisoner. From my experience in defense work, I should  
say that you could circumvent any possible harm from the  
prosecution along that line by having Mr. Wehde explain  
under direct examination just why he was sent to prison,  
how he happened to begin experimenting in finger-print  
forgery while there, and the fact that after nine months  
he was pardoned by President Harding. Mr. Wehde's efforts  
to help East Indian revolutionists, which ceased on the  
day this country entered the war, was no more a crime against